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# The Classical Weekly

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## LIFE VERSUS A LIVING

To one who has grown used to finding flings at the Classics almost everywhere, even in the short stories in cheap magazines, it is a pleasure to run across, unexpectedly, in such quarters, some utterance friendly to the Classics. Such utterances there are in a story in *The Saturday Evening Post*, for October 25, 1919. The story, by Frederick Orin Bartlett, is entitled *The Junior Member*, and is to be found on pages 14-15, 158, 161-162. It has to do with the history of a certain Jim Cousens, who in his Freshman year at College eloped with a girl from a nearby Preparatory School. Cousens and his wife dream their dreams of the things their son and their daughter are to do in College; the children are to enjoy the advantages which the parents had sacrificed first for their love and then for their children. To this end the parents laid aside \$3,000 for the education of their daughter, and \$5,000 for the education of their son. But the daughter imitated her mother's example, and married early and abruptly, and the son went into business, because as he put it, "four years after high seems a long time to put into school". Their dreams shattered in this way, Cousens lost interest in life, until his son practically forced him to take a vacation. This vacation he spent at Cambridge, and presently he entered College as a Freshman, while his wife resumed her study of music, which had been interrupted by her early marriage. In four years Cousens won both a B.A. and an M.A. He then returned to New York, and for a time watched the course of his son's business, noting that his son and his partner, in spite of their apparent success, lacked vision; in a word, as the result of his College training, gained after he was forty years of age, Cousens was able to see in the business what his son had been unable to see in it in over twenty years of devotion to it. When the father received an offer of \$5,000 per year to return as head clerk to the bank in whose service he had been while he had dreamed the dreams for his son and his daughter, the son, who had once thought his father slow, admitted like a man to his father that the father's view of the son's business was wider and deeper than the son's; as the boy put it to his father, "you see the big things". So the father, at a salary more than twice the size he ever earned before he went to College, becomes a member of his son's firm.

Two paragraphs of the story deserve quotation in full. One occurs in the first part of the story, where the author is describing the sacrifices the father and mother made with a view to sending the children to College (14):

Cousens was not academic about the project. He wished to give his children the benefit of his own experience, and the longer he lived in New York City the more keenly he felt the difference between those men whose lives were built upon the foundation of arts and letters and those whose lives were not. He knew the difference in his own life. If he had an intimate knowledge of that vast historical past to fall back on he would to-day have a better perspective. He would in a sense be the outgrowth of all that had gone before. Even those who had come away from college without much detail acquired this much. It was inevitable. Then, too, they acquired so much more than they realized.

The other occurs in the description of the visit of forty-year old Cousens to the College whence he had departed so abruptly in his Freshman year twenty odd years before. Cousens had stepped into a room to look over the Announcements of courses open in the University (158):

Hungrily Cousens ran through pamphlet after pamphlet—particularly those on history and English and philosophy. These were not to him mere courses of study; they were invitations to join the group of thinking men who see life steady and see it whole. They were opportunities for a man to link himself up with the past, to interpret the present and reach forward toward the future. Without an intelligent conception of what had gone before, a man to day was no more than a grubworm boring aimlessly in the unilluminated earth, feeding on mud, with all the glories of the world lying concealed above him. That was all he had been doing—feeding on mud that the world called money. And four short years would have given him all this—would have taken him out of the earth and given him wings. Then he could have grubbed safely, because it would have been a mere incident.

C. K.

## THE SENATUS CONSULTUM ULTIMUM<sup>1</sup>

On October 21, 63 B.C., the Senate passed the decree *consules videant ne quid detrimenti res publica capiat*, directed at Catiline. On November 8, Cicero delivered what is known as the First Oration against Catiline, threatening the enforcement of this decree. That night Catiline left the city. On December 3 the conspirators confessed to the Senate, and on December 5, after a debate in the Senate, the five who were in custody were executed in the Tullianum.

It is our task to determine Cicero's opinion of this decree (which, for convenience, I shall call the *Consultum*), and to ascertain the reasons for the long delay between the passage of the decree and the execution of

<sup>1</sup>This paper was read at the First Fall Meeting of The Classical Association of the Atlantic States, held at the University of Pennsylvania, November 29, 1919.